

**From:** Alan Susee [alan@sjv.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 04, 2006 8:15 PM  
**To:** ME, Connect  
**Cc:** helpdesk@sjv.net  
**Subject:** ConnectME Comments

Phil

We [SJV Wireless ,Inc.] have been in the Internet business here in Fort Kent since 1995 - the first local ISP in the Fort Kent area. We started as a dialup provider and three years ago added wireless broadband to our services. We have brought broadband to numerous areas that had no other service except very poor dialup. One of those communities was the Sinclair area on Long Lake here in northern Aroostook county. We invested our own money in constructing two transmission sites in that area to deliver what we call broadband up here in the "other state of Maine" Our standard residential offering is 768k download and 128K upload. Although our service can support higher bandwidth offerings depending on the radio system installed [up to 10M] our typical customer is quite satisfied with the 768k package. In fact our major competitor offers DSL packages of 1.5M and higher but we still have customers that switch due to our better uptime and customer service. The governing factor here in this part of the state is more the cost per month than the actual bandwidth received. I think you are aware that we have somewhat limited disposable income in this area. We can offer 10M service but none of our customers will pay that monthly cost. We still have many dialup customers that have the option to go to broadband but chose not to simply to save the money.

We routinely receive calls for wireless broadband service from areas we do not currently serve such as the Allagash area and nearby communities of St. Francis and St. John. They currently have the option to get DSL service but are not satisfied or unwilling to pay the price for service. We are unable to expand as rapidly as the demand would require due to the lack of funds. We have borrowed many thousands of dollars to build our infrastructure [one that is HIPAA certified I might add] that covers hundreds of square miles but simply cannot continue to bring broadband to rural areas out of our own pocket without some assistance.

We are a small company that has built some of the most reliable broadband systems in this area. We are the only local ISP doing long range wireless broadband in this area - all of our wireless competitors simply utilize some Frankenstein WIFI system to do local broadband. We invested in commercial carrier class broadband systems along with the tower infrastructure to deliver the best broadband service possible.

**So in summary here are some of my concerns:**

- 1.) Defining broadband is a tricky challenge - at the moment I don't believe it is universally applicable to every part of Maine. Here in Northern Aroostook I personally would define "Broadband" as any commonly used fractional portion of a "T1" circuit starting with 256K. That of course might be very different if I were in the Portland area in which case 1.5M might be on the low side.**
- 2.) Feeding my network with multiple megabit circuits is very expensive here in Northern Maine. I would venture to say our costs of doing business are much higher here in Aroostook County than they are in southern Maine. This forces us to be cautious when we decide what kind of bandwidth to offer to our shared service customers which explains the lower speed of our "broadband".**
- 3.) What makes this industry are small ISP's - we put service into areas judged to be marginal profitable by the bigger Telco's. Without the small ISP's places like Sinclair Maine would still be without any "broadband" at all. Small ISP's do innovative things such as <http://www.sjv.net/webcam> to support tourism and community development. Small ISP's provide**

broader services - we supply the broadband, we sell the computer, we provide full repair services, we educate. Does Verizon do that, does the cable company do that?

4.) State programs involved in technology have a history of providing assistance/legislation that leaves large dominating companies in a very favorable position [who provides broadband to all the libraries in the state?] There seems to be minimal interest in involving smaller companies. I have the same concerns for this program. Small companies may not have the resources to meet the program requirements.

5.) There is a real and serious need for a state entity such as the ConnectME authority to act as a body that oversees the fair use of available frequencies/channels used within a community. Currently it is more like the old west - it's easy for a competitor to move into an area and spend money to overpower a competitors system with interference. The deepest pockets will win - not the better service and the public is the real loser. With the data the Authority plans to collect it would be possible to approve projects or coordinate bringing a second competitor into an area by ensuring they use non-interfering systems, frequencies or channels.

Thank you for your time

Alan Susee  
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**From:** Lindley, Phil [mailto:Phil.Lindley@maine.gov] **On Behalf Of** ME, Connect  
**Sent:** Monday, October 02, 2006 9:22 AM  
**To:** Alan Susee  
**Subject:** RE: ConnectME Website

Alan Susee:

The correct website URL is <http://www.maine.gov/connectme/>. It is working this morning, and was last week. I am not sure how the original template came up this weekend, but let me know if you continue to have problems. Regarding the initial standard for broadband in the proposed rule, the Authority hopes to receive comments on whether that level is appropriate. Comments are due November 1.

Last year the Broadband Access Infrastructure Board said, "For example, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) classifies an Internet connection of 200kbps as "broadband" or highspeed without reference to whether that speed is upstream or down. That standard is considered by this Board to be woefully out-of-date. Contrast this figure with what today's typical broadband consumers of DSL are tolerating, but beginning to chafe at: speeds of 3Mbps down and 512kbps up. Therefore, we recommend that policies enacted as part of this comprehensive program focus initially on a basic connectivity level of 1.5Mbps downlink and 256 kbps uplink, but that the definition be regularly and carefully reviewed and revised as necessary." ([http://www.maine.gov/mpuc/broadband/activities/telecom\\_infra\\_steering.htm](http://www.maine.gov/mpuc/broadband/activities/telecom_infra_steering.htm))

Please let me know if you have other questions.

Phil

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From: Alan Susee [<mailto:alan@sjv.net>]  
Sent: Sunday, October 01, 2006 4:20 PM  
To: ME, Connect  
Subject: ConnectME Website

Sunday, Oct. 1, 2006 your website content seems to have been removed. Every page has the following text [likely from the original template]

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo dolores et ea rebum. Stet clita kasd gubergren, no sea takimata sanctus est Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua.

On another note:

I'm concerned that the authority has decided that the minimum requirements to be considered broadband is providing at least 1.5M service. The FCC requirements are minimum of 200K or better. I think the authority sets the bar just a little high for rural delivery and could possibly eliminate some providers.

Alan Susee  
SJV Wireless, Inc.  
[www.sjv.net](http://www.sjv.net) <<http://www.sjv.net>>  
meep, meep, meep!!!